



Bureau of Automotive Repair

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VISIBLE SMOKE TEST CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET

VISIBLE SMOKE TEST ADDED TO SMOG CHECK

Beginning in March 2008, all vehicles subject to a Smog Check inspection will require a visual test for smoke. The new test is called the Visible Smoke Test.

Assembly Bill 1870 (Chapter 761, 2006) mandates that a test for visible smoke be incorporated into the Smog Check inspection to determine whether the vehicle emits any visible smoke from the tailpipe or Positive Crankcase Ventilation (PCV) System.

WHAT IS THE TEST FOR?

Smoke from a vehicle's tailpipe contributes to California's air quality problems. The smoke consists of particulate matter, small particles of pollution that are inhaled and can cause lung problems, heart disease, and other health consequences. In addition, smoke from an engine can also damage emission control systems on a vehicle, like the catalytic converter and oxygen (O₂) sensor, making them less effective. Less effective emissions control systems translate to unhealthy air for all of California.

WHAT IF THE VEHICLE FAILS THE TEST?

A vehicle that fails the Visible Smoke Test fails its Smog Check. Repairs must be made before the vehicle can receive a Smog Check certificate. Smog Check repair stations employ technicians who are licensed to perform these repairs.

If your vehicle fails the Visible Smoke Test and needs repair, you may be eligible for up to \$500 in financial assistance. You also may qualify for \$1,000 to retire your vehicle through a state-approved dismantler. You also may be eligible for a waiver from making the repairs if you meet certain income requirements. To see if you qualify for any of these programs, contact the Consumer Assistance Program at 866.272.9642, or check the BAR Web site at www.smogcheck.ca.gov.

If you wish to dispute your vehicle's Visible Smoke Test results, you may schedule an appointment with the State Referee by calling 800.622.7733.